

the Bible, and that the Bishop had only answered by excommunication. He breaks out at the end of the letter into unfavourable statements about the Bishops and the Pope. 'As Christ's law teaches us to bless them that injure us, the Pope's law teaches us to curse them, and in their great sentence that they use they presume to damn the men to hell that they curse. . . . As Christ's law bids to minister things freely to the people, the Pope with his law sells for money, after the quantity of the gift, pardons, ordination, blessing and sacraments and prayers and benefices and preaching to the people. As Christ's law teaches peace, the Pope with his law absolves men for money, to gather the people, priests and others, to fight for his cause.' He also sent a petition to the Houses of Parliament, which consisted chiefly of quotations from the Scriptures.¹

Another Liollard of this neighbourhood was a man named Walter Brute, of Welsh parentage but educated at Oxford, where he had written theological works in support of Wycliffe.² He was Swynderby's friend and companion, and adhered to all his teaching. Like Swynderby, he hid from the ecclesiastical officers, and sent a manuscript into Court as his only answer to the Bishop's summons. This strange piece has been fortunately preserved for us at length. It is full of Scripture phrases, applied in the strained and mystical sense which we associate with later Puritanism, though it really derives its origin from the style of theological controversies older far than the Lollards themselves. Rome is the * daughter of Babylon,' * the great whore sitting upon many waters with whom the Kings of the earth have committed fornication.' 'With her enchantments, witchcrafts and Simon Magus* merchandise the whole world is infected and seduced.' Brute prophesies her fall in the language of the Revelation. The Pope is * the beast ascending out of the earth having two horns like unto a lamb,' who compels 'small and great, rich and poor, to worship the beast and to take his mark in their forehead and on their hands.' It is easy to perceive, after reading such phrases, one reason why the

¹ Foxe, iii. 107-31.

* Bale's *Scriptores*. Basle edition, 1557-9, p. 503-